



Rockies and Plains Office
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May 4, 2015

Environmental Quality Council
Legislative Environmental Policy Office
State Capitol Building
1301 E. 6th Ave., Room 171
P.O. Box 201704
Helena MT 59620-1704

RE: Operational Quarantine at Yellowstone NP

Mr Chairman and members of the EQC:

Defenders of Wildlife supports the efforts of Yellowstone National Park and the Ft Peck Tribes to implement an operational quarantine program. Use of existing facilities at Ft Peck is a cost-effective and safe means to conserve important Yellowstone genetics while sparing some bison from the annual and needless ship to slaughter program. Defenders has inspected the proposed receiving facility and its environs, and has worked closely with the Ft Peck authorities in the past on bison conservation. It is our opinion that this facility is as safe from the standpoint of disease containment and testing as any existing facility elsewhere.

We urge you to help move this process forward by directing the MDOL to work with the NPS on a mutually agreeable solution that does not duplicate the effort that has already been expended at Ft Peck to create a secure facility. The tragedy of additional ship to slaughter can only be ameliorated by a successful program to divert some of these incredibly valuable animals into beneficial programs to establish additional conservation herds elsewhere. To delay yet another year only compounds the ongoing tragedy and controversy.

Sincerely,

Steve Forrest
Senior Representative
Rockies and Plains Program
sforrest@defenders.org

ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY
COUNCIL. 2015-16

May 5, 2016

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Exhibit 15